



## Curtis M. Kassab, Basketball Coach, The Steward School

By Tom McKenna | Photos by Ashley Cogbill

Curtis Kassab is passionate about basketball. Sure, he holds B.S. degrees in Business Management and Long-term health care administration. And sure, he is a VP and owner (with brother Edward) of Home Care Staffing. But it's basketball that is Coach Kassab's passion, and his hobby. "I coach because I want to make a difference in kids' lives," Coach Kassab said. "I develop relationships with players that last a lifetime."

As the new head coach at The Steward School, he brings a track record of success, having shepherded the Deep Run boys program to a record of 103-46, coaching the team to the Regional Tournament for six consecutive years, the State Tournament in 2015 and 2016, and the State quarterfinals in 2016, earning a 2016 Virginia Prep Final Ranking of #5. That year, Coach Kassab was named 2016 Central Region Coach of Year.

At Steward, Athletic Director Bruce Secret says the school is so happy to have Coach Kassab leading their boys basketball program. "The Steward School is blessed to have someone of Curt's professionalism, knowledge, and ability coaching our boys," Secret said. "He has a tremendous passion for the game and goes above and beyond for our players.

He doesn't simply teach them how to play basketball, he truly cares for them."

Coach Kassab puts the players first. "When a player leaves my program, they know they have a friend for life whom they can always count on," he remarks. "I take great pride in letting my players know how much I love and appreciate their efforts while playing in our program."

Playing for Coach Kassab isn't easy though. His program is disciplined and rigorous. He explains, "every kid thrives on discipline and hard work. My coaching philosophy has always been to expect the kids to give 110% and to do so myself. After high school, my players really begin to realize the value of our grueling work ethic and structure. Installing discipline in kids today is critical to their ability to succeed in life and outside of the athletic arena."

Secret concurred that Coach Kassab's impact on players is long-term. "One great thing about Curt is that he doesn't just know high school basketball," Secret said. "He knows collegiate programs too, and uses that expertise in running our program. This helps our young men as they transition to the next level – both in life and on the court."

Before Deep Run, Coach Kassab was Associate Head Coach of the women's program at VCU, where he helped coach the team to an overall record of 74 – 27, the best three-year period in program history, and to their first appearance in NCAA Women's Tournament. He was also head varsity girl's coach at Atlee High School in Mechanicsville, where he led that team to an overall record of 174 – 33 and to becoming Virginia AAA State Champions in 2003, when they also achieved a national ranking of 44th.

Coach is a five-time VHSL District Coach of the Year and a two-time VHSL Richmond Central Region Coach of the Year. In 2003, he was named Associated Press VHSL Virginia High School Coach of the Year. Coach Kassab has also spent many hours over the years coaching young people in various camps.

Most importantly, Coach Kassab is a family man, and with his wife Stephanie and their daughter Caylee, who's six years old, lives in the Covington neighborhood. He's called Richmond home for 15 years.

The Steward School is fortunate to have an accomplished, giving man like Curtis Kassab on their staff.